

meridian. Measures may be made on one or both sides of the meridian, and they may be repeated three or more times, so as to reduce the accidental errors. This method has been most extensively used by Professor Hough, of the Dearborn Observatory, Chicago. For his fine series of measures, the formulæ necessary for the reduction of the measures to the central meridian, and his careful discussion of them, see the Annual Reports of the Dearborn Observatory, and especially that for 1882. From measures on thirty-one nights he found the mean error of a single pair of measures $\pm 0^m.9$, and $\pm 0^m.4$ for the average mean probable error for any day.

In conclusion, we may gather from the above notes that careful eye-estimates (the line joining the eyes being placed parallel to the belts), on good nights, and after some practice, will be worthy of confidence, and form useful contributions to the study of the phenomena of the planet.

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Note on the Period of T Centauri. By Alex. W. Roberts.

The minimum of *T Centauri* which took place in April 1896 happened at the same time as full moon, and so a direct determination of it was impossible.

Observations taken immediately before and after the minimum indicates that the minimum took place 1896 April 26. A minimum (observed both by Lieut.-Col. Markwick and myself) took place on 1895 April 26, and between these two dates there are four light variations, three of which have been observed at Lovedale. We thus obtain for *T Centauri* a period of 91.5 days, a period in satisfactory agreement with that already determined (*Monthly Notices*, March 1896, vol. lvi., p. 349), viz., 91.2 days.

In his *Ephemeriden veränderlicher Sterne für 1896*, page 2, Dr. Hartwig considers that a period of 360 days satisfies the earlier measures. Considering four periods to have taken place in 360 days we obtain a period of 90 days. Still some uncertainty must surround a determination of this kind, inasmuch as it is obtained simply from observations taken at or near maximum, and the maximum of *T Centauri* is not so distinctly marked as the minimum phase.

I hope by the close of the year to deal more fully with this, as well as with other southern long period variables; my present purpose, however, is fulfilled in substantiating the period given in the paper already referred to.

Lovedale :
May 1896.

Observations of Comet b 1896 (*Swift*) made at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich
(Communicated by the Astronomer Royal.)

The observations were made with the Sheepshanks' Equatorial, aperture 6·7 inches, by taking transits over two cross-wires at right angles to each other, and each inclined 45° to the parallel of declination. Magnifying power 55.

1896. May	Greenwich Mean Solar Time.			Observer.	* R.A.		Corr. for Refraction.	Log Factor of Parallax.	* N.P.D.		Corr. for Refraction.	Log Factor of Parallax.	No. of Comps.	Apparent R.A.			Apparent N.P.D.			Comp. Star.
	d	h	m s		m.	s			'	"				h	m	s	'	"		
May	9	9	46 51	A. C.	+0	24·26	0·00	9·3795	+1	23·2	+0·2	0·8912 <i>n</i>	3	2	6 19·73	26	9	24·6	a	
	10	9	45 22	W.	+2	35·33	0·00	9·3230	-6	17·2	-0·8	0·8909 <i>n</i>	6	1	59 24·59	25	17	25·1	b	
	12	9	50 47	A. C.	+0	27·47	0·00	9·0713	-1	0·2	-0·2	0·8914 <i>n</i>	6	1	45 13·44	23	45	39·7	c	
	14	9	35 3	B.	-3	40·71	0·00	8·9696	+0	4·3	0·0	0·8870 <i>n</i>	4	1	30 55·58	22	29	2·9	d	
June	20	9	54 18	A. C.	+4	3·49	0·00	9·4701 <i>n</i>	-2	50·9	-0·4	0·8651 <i>n</i>	3	0	47 24·48	19	44	46·4	e	
	30	10	32 12	B.	-1	25·67	-0·02	9·9869 <i>n</i>	+3	5·2	+0·2	0·7213 <i>n</i>	5	23	36 53·09	17	34	14·3	f	
	1	10	43 2	A. C.	-4	18·24	-0·03	0·0324 <i>n</i>	+4	22·3	+0·2	0·6644 <i>n</i>	3	23	23 12·22	17	22	9·4	g	
	5	10	41 9	"	-2	44·78	+0·02	0·0719 <i>n</i>	-2	13·8	-0·1	0·5733 <i>n</i>	3	22	56 23·38	17	9	54·6	h	
	6	13	23 25	B.	-0	51·81	+0·02	0·0551 <i>n</i>	+3	25·1	0·0	9·2022	5	k	

Notes.

The observations are corrected for refraction, but not for parallax. They are also corrected for the error of inclination of the wires and for the motion of the comet.
May 20.—Comet very faint and ill-defined, owing to moonlight.
" 30.—Comet extremely faint, with very slight central condensation.
June 1.—Comet very faint.
" 5 and 6.—Comet exceedingly faint and ill-defined; barely visible.
The initials A. C., B., W., are those of Mr. Crommelin, Mr. Bryant, and Mr. Wittell respectively.